

CLAIMS

1. An appliqué adapted for use in an instrument,  
instrument cluster or instrument panel of an automotive  
5 vehicle, the appliqué comprising a sheet form member  
having an obverse side and a reverse side and comprising  
a plastics material, the sheet form member comprising:

at least one substantially planar portion having an  
obverse area on the obverse side and a reverse area on  
10 the reverse side;

at least one rim or ring portion integrally formed  
with the or the respective at least one substantially  
planar portion, the or each at least one rim portion  
forming a closed shape which encloses the or the  
15 respective at least one substantially planar portion;

a further substantially planar portion having a  
further obverse area on the obverse side and a further  
reverse area on the reverse side, the or each further  
substantially planar portion being integrally formed with  
20 the or the respective at least one rim portion, the  
further substantially planar portion surrounding the or  
the respective at least one rim portion;

the at least one rim portion protruding from the or  
the respective obverse area and from the further obverse  
25 area by a height of at least 4mm, and the at least one  
rim portion being recessed from the or the respective  
reverse area and further reverse area, and wherein

the or each at least one rim portion is of a first colour and the or the respective substantially planar portion is of a second colour different to the first colour.

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2. An appliqué as claimed in claim 1, wherein the further substantially planar portion is of the second colour.

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3. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 1 or 2, wherein the first colour is silver or chrome and the second colour is black.

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4. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein there are provided at least two rim portions at least one of said rim portions having a height of at least 4 mm from the respective obverse area and a further obverse area common to each of the at least two rim portions.

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5. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein there are provided two rim portions, each having a height of at least 4 mm from the obverse side, the two portions being located side by side.

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6. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein an ink coating is applied to a surface of at

least one rim portion, a pigment of an ink of the ink coating being dissolved in a high temperature resin base.

7. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
5 wherein the height of the at least one rim portion is between 4 mm and 9 mm.

8. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
10 wherein the height of the at least one rim portion is 4 mm to 7.5 mm.

9. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
15 wherein the height of the at least one rim portion is 6.5 mm.

10. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the closed shape is selected from one of:  
substantially circular, oval or elliptical.

20 11. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the or each substantially planar portion is provided with dial chaplets.

25 12. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the at least one rim portion comprises a first wall, a second wall, a top part and an open base part.

13. An appliqué as claimed in claim 12, wherein the base part of the at least one rim portion has a width from an

outer-most side of the second wall to an inner-most side of the first wall from 5mm to 9mm.

14. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 12 or 13,  
5 wherein the first wall is convex in shape when viewed from the obverse side of the sheet form member.

15. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 14,  
10 wherein the first wall of the at least one rim portion comprises part of a circle having a radius of 10 mm to 20 mm.

16. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 15,  
15 wherein the second wall of the at least one rim portion is substantially vertical.

17. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 15,  
20 wherein the second wall is inclined at a shallow angle to the top part of the respective at least one rim portion.

18. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 17,  
25 wherein the first wall protrudes more from the obverse side than the second wall does from the obverse side, and the top part comprises part of a circle having a radius of 0.5 mm.

19. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the sheet form member is provided with a pressure sensitive adhesive coated on the reverse side.

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20. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein a spacing between outer-most walls of adjacent rim portions is 45 mm to 50 mm.

5 21. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 2 to 21, wherein the at least one substantially planar portion and the further substantially planar portion have a thickness of between 0.25 mm and 0.5 mm.

10 22. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the plastics material substantially comprises polycarbonate or ABS.

15 23. An appliqué as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein the plastics material comprises a blend of polycarbonate and poly-butylene-terraphthalate (PBT).

20 24. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sheet form member is provided with a printed design.

25 25. An appliqué as claimed in claim 24, wherein the printed design is provided by printing on the obverse side and on the reverse side of the sheet form member.

26. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sheet form member is a laminate comprising two or more layers laminated together.

27. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein an ink coating is provided on the at least one  
rim portion, such as an obverse surface thereof, a  
pigment of an ink of the ink coating being dissolved in a  
5 high temperature resin base.

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28. An appliqué as claimed in claim 27, wherein the high  
temperature resin base has a softening temperature of  
above 160°C.

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29. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 27 or 28,  
wherein the resin base for the ink coating is a dissolved  
plastics material or acrylic cellulose acetate butyrate.

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30. An appliqué as claimed in claims 29, wherein the  
plastics material is a copolycarbonate which is a  
combination of bisphenol A (4,4'-isopropylidenediphenol)  
and bisphenol TMC (trimethylenecyclohexane bisphenol).

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31. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 29 or 30,  
wherein the plastics material is dissolved in a non-  
halogenated solvent.

32. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 27 to 31,  
wherein the high temperature resin based ink contains a  
chrome and/or aluminium pigment.

33. An appliqué as claimed in claims 32, wherein the  
pigment comprises particles or flakes having an average

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size in the range of 5 microns to 55 microns in diameter or length.

34. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 27 to 33,  
5 wherein the ink coating forms a closed shape, the closed shape optionally being annular, oval or elliptical.

35. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 1 to 26,  
10 wherein an ink coating is provided on the at least one rim portion, such as an obverse surface thereof, a pigment of an ink of the ink coating being dissolved in an acrylic cellulose acetate butyrate resin base.

36. An appliqué as claimed in claim 35, wherein the  
15 pigment comprises particles or flakes having an average size in the range of 5 microns to 55 microns in diameter or length.

37. A component for an automotive vehicle comprising an  
20 appliqué according to any of claims 1 to 36.

38. A component as claimed in claim 37, wherein the  
25 component comprises an instrument, instrument cluster, instrument panel, gauge or control assembly for an automotive vehicle.

39. A component as claimed in either of claims 37 or 38,  
wherein the component further comprises a rigid backing part having the appliqué mounted thereto.

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AMENDED SHEET

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40. A component as claimed in claim 39, wherein the appliqué is moulded to the backing part.

5 41. A component as claimed in claim 39, wherein the appliqué is glued or clipped to the backing part.

41. A component as claimed in any of claims 39 to 41, wherein the backing part is made from a plastics material  
10 such as polycarbonate or ABS.

43. An automotive vehicle including an appliqué according to any of claims 1 to 36.

15 44. A method of forming an appliqué according to any of claims 1 to 36, the method comprising the steps of providing a substantially planar sheet; and forming the at least one rim portion on said substantially planar sheet.

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45. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein the rim portion(s) is/are formed by a forming process comprising pressure forming.

25 46. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein the rim portion(s) are formed by a forming process comprising match metal forming.



47. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein the rim portion(s) are formed by a forming process comprising cold forming.

5 48. A method as claimed in any of claims 44 to 47, wherein the method includes the step of applying to at least one area of a reverse side of the substantially planar sheet an ink, the at least one area then being formed into the at least one rim portion.

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49. A method of manufacturing an appliqué adapted for use in an instrument, instrument cluster or instrument panel of an automotive vehicle as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1 to 7.

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50. A method of manufacturing an appliqué adapted for use in an instrument, instrument cluster or instrument panel of an automotive vehicle as hereinbefore described with reference to Figure 8, Figure 10, Figure 11 or

20 Figure 12.

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51. A display panel, decorative panel, instrument panel or appliqué for a vehicle such as an automotive vehicle, comprising a sheet form member having at least one portion integrally formed thereon, the at least one portion having a height of at least 4mm from a surface of the sheet form member, wherein there are provided at least two portions, each of the at least two portions projecting from a substantially planar first, front or

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obverse surface of the sheet form member, the/each at  
least one portion being upstanding from an obverse  
surface of the sheet form member, such that the/each at  
least one portion is convex when viewed from the obverse  
5 surface of the sheet form member, and is concave when  
viewed from a second, rear or reverse surface of the  
sheet form member, and wherein further a first portion  
defines a boundary of a speedometer gauge and a second  
portion defines a boundary of an engine speed or rev  
10 counter or clock, first and second areas within the first  
and second portions optionally being provided with dial  
chaplets.